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**NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
Newport, R.I.**

Israeli Operational Art: The Six Day War

How the Israeli Defense Forces achieved overwhelming success against overwhelming odds

By

Mike Obadal

MAJ, US Army

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

Signature: _____

4 May 2012

ABSTRACT

Outnumbered almost 3 to 1, fighting on three fronts, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) handed its Arab adversaries a significant defeat from 5 to 11 June, 1967. The resulting destruction of Arab militaries and Israeli control of significant terrain provided Israel valuable strategic depth in the following years. In the course of the one-sided war, the IDF demonstrated superior tactics while Arab forces suffered for lack of competent leadership. However, the main reason for such a quick victory was due to the development of superior operational plans; the IDF expertly balanced the operational factors of time, space and force in order to attack the Arab center of gravity and achieve specific operational objectives, all which contributed to the national goal - to ensure the survival of Israel.

In early June of 1967, Israel faced potential invasion by a coalition of Arab countries centered on Egypt, Jordan and Syria. Outnumbered almost three to one, Israeli leaders decided that the strongest strategic defense was an operational offense, and launched a surprise attack. Six days later, the Air Forces of Egypt, Syria and Jordan lie in ruins, over 30,000 Arab servicemen were dead, missing or captured, the bulk of Egypt's armored forces was destroyed, and Israel controlled the Sinai, Golan Heights and West Bank.¹ Considering that Arab forces were prepared for war, enjoyed Soviet backing and weapons, and had fought Israel before on similar ground, why was the war so one sided? Essentially, in the years and months prior to June 1967, Israel developed superior operational plans that manufactured advantages and overcame deficiencies in time, space and force to achieve operational objectives.

Background and Summary of Actions

Judaism, Christianity and Islam all trace the roots of their religion to the common "Holy Land" upon which current-day Israel sits. Control of the land changed hands regularly for thousands of years, and today remains a significant issue between Jews and Arabs in the Middle East. Since it was formed in 1947, Israel and its Arab neighbors have engaged in political and military conflicts over land, resources and terrorism. The political and violent incidences are continuous, and four high-intensity wars were fought in the first twenty-five years alone of Israel's existence.

The 1948, or "First" Arab-Israeli War, increased the territory for the new state and caused a geographical separation of ethnic and religious groups throughout the Middle East, including a division of the holy city of Jerusalem between Jordan and Israel, which would become important during the Six-Day War. In 1956 Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal and closed the Strait of

Tiran to Israeli shipping, cutting off Israel from the Red Sea. Israel responded with offensive force, re-opening its shipping lane at the mouth of the Gulf of Aqaba and taking control of the Sinai Peninsula.

Arab-Israeli tensions increased on three fronts in 1967 – Gaza/Sinai, Golan, and the West Bank. Egyptian forces displaced UN observers in the Sinai, growing to seven divisions with 900 tanks in close proximity to Israel's southern border, and again closed the Strait of Tiran to Israel-bound ships. Syrian, Jordanian and Iraqi forces began a buildup on the eastern and northeastern borders, just several miles from the Mediterranean and Tel Aviv. Frustrated IDF units sat in the desert waiting and Arab forces built forward deployed power, while the Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol and the Cabinet deliberated the pros and cons of initiating military action. On the night of 3 June 1967, they listened to the proposed war plans from operational leaders who assured success on all three fronts.² The confident and passionate presentations of the IDF generals, combined with the unofficial and predictably vague endorsement of an Israeli attack from U.S. President Johnson, drove the Cabinet to approve a pre-emptive strike to avoid what appeared to be an imminent invasion by the Arab coalition.

At 0745 on June 5th, 1967, the Israeli Air Force (IAF) launched air strikes on Egyptian airfields, destroying most of the long-range bombers, MIG-21 fighters and the runways in only about 90 minutes. The destruction of the Jordanian and Syrian Air Forces followed later that day. Simultaneously, a “mailed fist”³ of three divisions and one brigade swept across the Sinai Peninsula through difficult and heavily defended terrain, closing on the Suez Canal and encircling the numerically superior Egyptian Army in just 72 hours. The IDF also attacked into the West Bank, capturing the Old City of Jerusalem from the Jordanians, and assaulted the Golan Heights driving out a well-entrenched Syrian Army. By the time a UN cease fire was brokered,

the IDF stood on large amounts of new Israeli terrain, providing a significant strategic buffer, and the enemy forces of just a week previous were no longer a viable threat.

Israeli Operational Art

From 1956 to 1967, the IDF prepared for war with Egypt, Syria and Jordan through intelligence and reconnaissance, weapons modifications and acquisitions, professional military education, training exercises and exhaustive planning.⁴ Many of these preparations focused on the offensive – gaining territory and the initiative by attacking to prevent from having to defend on several fronts. Operational plans for several contingencies were established, war-gamed and rehearsed, each to achieve an independent operational or strategic objective. General Ezer Weizmann, the IDF's Chief of Operations, stated “We have...a plan for everything – even for capturing the North Pole. The plans are like bricks. They can be used one by one to build up a structure as the situation develops.”⁵ As June 1967 approached, the major plans came together – Hammer (Golan), Nachshon (Sinai), Focus (Air War), Atzmon (Gaza) and several others which supported the overall objectives.

By 1967, IDF doctrine – and especially the above war plans – focused on attacking to achieve fast territorial gains instead of defensive operations. The driving factor for the offensive nature was the lack of strategic depth. At only eight miles across at its narrowest, tactical success by the enemy could result in Israeli strategic losses. By seizing the initiative and fighting on Arab soil, the IDF could provide a buffer between the front and the Israeli population. The requisite speed was to avoid intervention by the USA and USSR and achieve objectives before a UN mandated treaty could be enforced. Finally, an additional desire for territorial gains was a result

of planning for war termination, for which the Israelis wanted “an asset” to offer the Arabs while negotiating a political settlement.⁶

In addition to doctrine and plans, IDF leaders had tailored *tactical* aspects of the IDF to meet the requirements of operational plans. Predicting armored battles in the open deserts of the Sinai, IDF tanks were outfitted with a larger main gun and crews trained on destroying tanks with long-range shots – which proved very effective in 1967⁷. The preponderance of fighter-bombers over traditional bombers allowed transition from a bombing role in early stages to fighter and ground-attack roles once Arab air forces were destroyed. In addition, Israel held little value in attacking Arab population centers, which further reduced the need for pure bombing aircraft. The design of a ‘booster rocket’ bomb to deeply penetrate runways was the result of plans like Focus, which prioritized cratering runways second only to the destruction of bombers.⁸ Planning to fight on Arab terrain, the IDF fielded the compact Uzi sub-machinegun, which allowed IDF soldiers engaged in close-quarters battle in the tight confines of Arab trenches and bunkers an advantage over defenders equipped with the unwieldy AK-47.⁹ This composition of the IDF arsenal and modification of tactics stemmed directly from operational plans against specific adversaries.

National Objectives

The lack of strategic depth due to geography presented the most pressing and formidable challenge for the government, the military and the population. Therefore, the primary national objective was to ensure the *survival of Israel*. This is ultimately why Israel went to war, but there were several elements to Israel’s desired end state – access to the Red Sea, security of

settlements, reduction in border conflict with Jordan and Syria, and a national desire to control all of Jerusalem – which helped to shape operational objectives.¹⁰

Access to the Red Sea is only available to Israel through the port city of Eilat and the narrow Strait of Tiran. Navigating the Strait, Israeli mariners could be easily observed by Egyptians on one side and Saudis on the other. Denial of access to Eilat was as simple as a ground force near Sharm el-Sheikh postured to threaten shipping from the shore, and when Egyptian President Nasser did so in May of 1967, Israel considered a few options, but none were supportable or especially reasonable.¹¹ The port itself was not irreplaceable for shipping, considering Israel's large Mediterranean coastline, but it was an important part of the oil-importation system. When combined with the flagrant principle of the matter, opening the Strait became a significant aspect of the desired end state.

Border issues with Syria and Jordan had been increasing, with ground and air skirmishes, terrorism and shelling of Israeli villages. In violation of previous agreements, Syria and Jordan were attempting to redirect additional water from the Jordan River away from Israel, which would have had economic and environmental impacts on the agricultural regions and the Sea of Galilee.¹² Capturing the Golan Heights would provide significant control of the Jordan River, halting the shelling, reducing terrorist safe-havens and stopping the water diversion plans. The West Bank region caused many similar problems between Israel and Jordan, but included a greater matter of Israeli national spirit. The demarcation line between Jordan and Israel ran through Jerusalem and isolated the 'Old City' from Israelis,¹³ who felt a religious-patriotic attachment to that part of Jerusalem, and even considered it the "basis of Zionism."¹⁴ Apart from the specific regional issues of water and the 'Old City', annexing the Golan Heights and the

West Bank also supported the strategic objective of survival by expanding Israel's strategic depth.

Theater Strategic and Operational Objectives

To achieve the national strategic objective of survival and arrive at the desired end state, three *theater strategic objectives* for the military emerged: defend the cities and civilian population from air, sea or land attacks, open the Strait of Tiran, and increase Israel's strategic depth by capturing surrounding territory.

Each geographic commander – South, Central and North – had his specific operational objectives. General Gavish in the South was to encircle and destroy the Egyptian Army on the Sinai, and capture Sharm el-Sheik in order to control the Sinai and open the Straight. General Narkiss of the Central Command was to avoid conflict with Jordan until Egypt had been dealt with and King Hussein's intentions were clear. Once conflict erupted, Narkiss was to capture all of the West Bank and the Old City of Jerusalem. In the North, General Elazar was to traverse the Golan Heights and capture an appreciable amount of terrain previously belonging to Syria.

Air Force Chief Motti Hod was assigned the air warfare objective of destroying Arab air forces in the opening hours of the war. This use of operational fires by the IDF accomplished two goals – destruction of Egypt's bombers, therefore protecting the Israeli population – and rendering the MiGs and runways incapable of supporting Egyptian, Jordanian and Syrian forces on the ground. This victory early on allowed the IAF to shift focus to ground and maritime support for the remainder of the conflict.¹⁵

Israel's small navy was assigned its own operational objectives – to protect the population centers through sea denial in the Mediterranean from the Osa and Komar missile boats which

could fire 1000 lbs short range cruise missiles. The Navy accomplished this by patrolling, but also launched special operations to Port Said against missile boats and submarines. While these raids were not tactically successful, they achieved the operational objectives when the Egyptian navy withdrew most missile boats to Alexandria, well out of their capable range to threaten Israel.¹⁶

Operational Factors – Space

This was the most critical of the three operational factors for the IDF – at only about the size of New Jersey, Israel's population centers were vulnerable to attack from the air, sea and land. Jordanian artillery could reach Tel-Aviv, and enemy mobile armored formations could potentially move quickly across the southern desert from the Sinai to Jordan, cutting off Eilat and capturing a large portion of Israel. The advantage of Israel's small area was they enjoyed interior lines and could quickly move supplies and forces between the fronts. Although Syrian and Jordanian forces could position themselves easily on the Israeli border, the Sinai presented an appreciable amount of space and natural barriers between Israel and Egypt, providing the IDF with days or even weeks to react to Egyptian advances. However, by the end of May, Egypt's movement across that space was complete. At that point, Israel had armored forces in close proximity on three sides, and if Arab forces were able to penetrate IDF defensive perimeters, the resultant tactical defeat could produce a major strategic loss.¹⁷

The Israeli perception of space affected the operational idea by driving a plan that: first capitalized on interior lines by sequencing attacks over the three fronts, allowing the IDF to concentrate forces at critical points. Second, it protected the population centers by making the first priority of the Israeli Air Force (IAF) to destroy Egypt's runways and bomber fleet,¹⁸ and

using the Navy to conduct sea denial operations to prevent sea-borne missile attacks.¹⁹ Finally, it avoided having to conduct a fixed defense near the border by denying the Egyptians the initiative and attacking first.

Operational Factors – Time

Careful consideration of time was essential in three areas – the initiation of war, the sequencing, and the duration. Every day that passed in May and June meant more Egyptian forces closer to Israel's border, and more Soviet materiel arriving in Syrian ports,²⁰ while Iraq and other Arab coalition states moved supporting forces into the theater. Although the IDF was prepared to attack, PM Eshkol demanded that the US give at least tacit consent to an Israeli attack prior to the first shot. "We...will need [US] help if victorious" was his stance, driven by his reasoning that the US would abandon Israel in response to a premature initiation.²¹

Sequencing of the operations was critical to concentration of forces, but also required because of the IDF's inability to fight a three-front war *and* still achieve the desired gains. Minister of Defense Moshe Dayan's instructions to Narkiss and Elazar in the Central and Northern Commands underscored the need to finish the Southern front before becoming decisively engaged with the Jordanians or Syrians. He told Narkiss that were he to be attacked, "bite your lip and hold the line...within a week we'll get to the [Suez] Canal...then the whole IDF will come here and get you out of trouble."²²

The duration of the impending war was important for several reasons. First, the Israeli economy was suffering from the lengthy activation of reserves that had occurred in May – in fact reserve forces comprised almost 80% of the IDF in 1967.²³ Second, Soviet intervention on behalf of the Arabs could severely limit Israeli post-war gains.²⁴ Third, it was assumed that the

UN Security Council would rapidly call for a cease-fire once the war did start, and Israel could only drag its feet meeting a UN mandate for so long before reaching a point of diminishing returns. Dayan informed his commanders “we’ll have no more than 72 hours”²⁵ before Israel could expect to have severe international pressure.

The operational plan was formed around these considerations – first, initiation was beholden to political interaction with the US and outside the control of operational commanders. Second, every commander had to understand the sequence of each operation – prematurely opening a front in Syria or Jordan, or taking too long in the Sinai, would prevent the accomplishment of the operational objectives. Finally, since it was assumed that international pressure would stop the war after just a few days, the capture of terrain was prioritized over the destruction of enemy forces.

Operational Factors – Force

With most Arab countries having pledged support to Egypt, Syria and Jordan, and several sending troops, airplanes and pilots, Israel suffered from a force ratio deficit of about 2.3 to 1 in three major categories – troops deployed, tanks and combat aircraft. Some of the IDF fought with WWII-era Sherman tanks, and would be at a significant technical disadvantage facing the Soviet-built T-55. Of particular concern to the IAF were the 150 new SA-2 surface to air missiles heavily deployed to guard Egypt’s air bases. In addition, the Egyptian Air Force possessed about 100 of the new MIG-21 fighters, along with almost 80 medium and light bombers²⁶ capable of quickly reaching Israel’s major cities. While many Arab forces suffered from poor maintenance and operational rates,²⁷ the IDF was still quantitatively outnumbered and outmatched by newer Soviet weapons.²⁸

These factors influenced the operational plan in several ways. To overcome the quantitative advantage of the Arabs, the Israelis decided that offensive operations would be sequenced, beginning in the south and progressing north when forces became available. This, combined with the tactical plans of attack, achieved *local* quantitative superiority through the massing of forces at one point of penetration. This “mailed fist” tactic was similar to the blitzkrieg methods first used by the German Army in WWII and worked on the premise of “totality of the tank”.²⁹ One of the most significant multipliers to address the force deficit was the utilization rate of fighters – up to 8 missions in one day for pilots and aircraft caused Nasser to believe that the US or UK had actively participated in the attacks.

Against well-entrenched defenders in the El-Arish complex, the IDF attacked at night, which meant losing air support but disoriented the Egyptian forces, which were defeated in a few hours, unable to effectively use artillery or direct fire in the dark.³⁰ The IAF also concentrated forces and sequenced operations, and placed a majority of forces forward to close the force ratio deficit. For example, on the first day only 12 combat aircraft remained dedicated to defend all of Israel from Arab air forces, because every other airplane was dedicated to offensive operations.³¹

Deception was also a component of leveling the force balance. For instance, a “false division” in southern Israel caused Egyptian forces to incorrectly reposition to counter the perceived threat. Further, by indicating a large buildup of amphibious vessels at Eilat, the IDF caused almost one-third of the Egyptian fleet to transit the Suez Canal to the Red Sea in order to protect Sharm el-Sheikh, causing them to be separated from the naval conflict in the Mediterranean.

Theorist Milan Vego states “the most complicated process...is to properly evaluate the factors of space, time and force in their various combinations and then harmonize them with the

...objective to be accomplished.”³² IDF planners clearly identified the relationships between the three factors, as reflected in operational plans. Sequencing the operations solved much of the force and time problem by exploiting the short interior lines. For example, to overcome the large amount of *space* on the Sinai with a lesser *force*, the IDF concentrated forces to only three points of penetration, achieving a local force superiority and rapid gains following the initial breakthroughs. IDF tanks and infantry traversed space that Egyptians thought impassable – the sand dunes in the northern Peninsula – allowing encirclement of the larger enemy force, while paratroopers were lifted over long distances with helicopters to attack artillery units in rear areas. Additionally, knowing that *time* was limited by external factors, the IDF prioritized gaining *space* over complete destruction of enemy forces.

Centers of Gravity

Perceptions of Arab objectives in May of 1967 vary widely – Nasser stated his desire for a return to the status quo of 1948, the recognition of the Strait of Tiran as Egyptian territorial waters, and the recognition of Palestinian Arab rights.³³ Israelis perceived the Arab coalition’s intentions as simple as the eradication of Israel and the expulsion of Jews from Palestine. Even if he had not intended to start a war, Nasser took many provocative steps in order to build his credibility as the informal leader of the Arabs, like expelling the UNEF in the Sinai, closing the Strait and making inflammatory remarks towards Israel; “We knew that closing the Gulf of Aqaba meant war with Israel...if war comes...the objective will be Israel’s destruction.”³⁴ Regardless of the true objectives on the eve of the war, these actions and the movement of 100,000 forces into the Sinai sent the clear message to Israel that the Arab coalition was planning an attack.

From the IDF perspective, the Arab coalition had several critical factors for the destruction of Israel. First was an Air Force capable of bombing cities, destroying Israeli Air Forces and supporting ground operations. Second was a land force capable of attacking into Israel, led by tanks and supported by combined arms. Lastly was a naval force that could prevent an Israeli amphibious attack on Sharm el-Sheik, and attack Israeli cities with the *Styx* short-range cruise missile. Although the IDF attacked each of these factors, the armored formations in the Sinai were viewed as “the most menacing threat” and therefore drew the focus of IDF planners as the Arab Center of Gravity (CoG).³⁵

Critical requirements to the armor in the Sinai included Movement and Maneuver, Command and Control, Logistics, Fires, and Intelligence. IDF planners exploited what they perceived as vulnerabilities to indirectly attack the armored units. By 8 a.m. on Day 1, the air campaign had cut the communication cable with Cairo, disrupting the Egyptian centralized control.³⁶ The IDF reduced Egyptian fires capabilities by destroying the EAF within the first hours, and attacked artillery units with heli-borne infantry prior to ground assaults. Israel conducted several deception operations, the most decisive of which made Egyptian Intelligence believe that the IDF had conducted a major buildup of forces in the same area used in the 1956 attack. This in turn caused several Egyptian units to be repositioned at the last minute, removing them from the actual line of advance, and vulnerable to the sweeping northern and southern attacks actually executed by the IDF.³⁷ Doing so, IDF commanders cut off critical lines of communication – affecting both the logistics for and the C2 of Egypt’s forces. Once encircled, many units could not sustain a long fight on the desolate Sinai, and were isolated from guidance and orders from their superiors. Although some IDF units attacked straight into Egyptian defenses, the

preponderance of effort focused on attacking the armored forces *indirectly*, which proved highly effective.

Other Elements of Operational Art

IDF leadership played a key role, as the style of operational and strategic leaders encouraged a decentralized, mission-oriented command system that allowed subordinate commanders the freedom to determine their methods. In the preceding years, leaders focused most aspects of military training and education on the eventuality of war with the Arabs, and specifically on the operational plans. General Hod remarked “We lived the plan, we slept the plan, we are the plan”³⁸, indicating the level of dedication to operational success leaders demanded of the IDF.

Morale of the IDF and the population became an important part of victory, as it became an “all hands” war to ensure maximum effort. Destroying the enemy’s air forces early on bolstered the confidence of the IDF and population, while having detrimental effects on the Arabs.³⁹ Israeli citizens could rest easier knowing the bombers were destroyed, and IDF forces became more efficient not having to protect from aerial attacks.

Israeli forces could have reached Cairo, Amman and Damascus within just a few days if they so desired but halted advances as planned, allowing the capital cities to remain unmolested. It seems that Israeli planners realized they had reached their culmination point by capturing the terrain in the Sinai, Golan and West Bank – to proceed further would have invited international intervention, insurgency and logistical challenges. Further, the capture of a capital city results in the requirement to govern the conquered, and Israel realized it would have sufficient difficulty retaining the relatively large gains it had already made. This appreciation for a force’s

culmination point allowed Israel to securely retain the conquered territory for several years instead of potentially losing all gains by inviting Soviet intervention.

Alternative Victory Theories

It can be argued that the Israelis were simply better tacticians – in fact the IDF still enjoys this reputation today. Tactically, the IDF has proven itself superior over its Arab neighbors – in historical instances of quantitatively similar forces facing off, the IDF has suffered far fewer casualties and lost far less materiel. This assumption that qualitatively superior forces were responsible for the success in 1967 is reasonable, for without tactical superiority the IDF would have likely lost several tactical engagements.

IDF tactics were not perfect, however. For example, during one engagement the IDF lost 35 tank commanders, including battalion commanders, due to the IDF technique of fighting with open tank hatches.⁴⁰ Additionally, the “mailed fist” in the Sinai left the infantry well behind the lead tanks, which on some occasions, unescorted by infantrymen, came under effective anti-tank fire causing increased casualties and a halt of forward progress.⁴¹ Near Giradeh, poor maneuver by IDF forces isolated some lead elements, and General Tal was compelled to divert other forces away from supporting tasks to break through the Egyptian lines.⁴²

To achieve the success they did in such a short period of time required more than qualitative advantage – it was achieved through planning the *right* tactical victories at the *right* times. The most poignant example is the sequencing of air attacks prior to the launch of the Sinai campaign. This provided several things to support the tactical efforts on the ground – removal of the air threat to IDF ground commanders, freedom to move forces by helicopter, unhindered IAF close

air support and air attack, and a morale boost for Israeli soldiers who could concentrate on enemy tanks instead of the sky.

Further, it can be argued that Arab forces suffered under incompetent leadership – both nationally and at the tactical level. Nasser’s confused and possibly misleading communications with King Hussein led the Jordanians to believe that the IDF was being repulsed from the Sinai and the IAF had been decimated, and therefore vulnerable to attack.⁴³ Egyptian military leaders failed to provide adequate protection to their critical requirements for defeating Israel – their long range bombers and supply lines to the armored forces in the Sinai. Reports indicated that tactical officers to the lowest level on all three fronts abandoned their men and fled, with predictable results against IDF attackers.⁴⁴ In one case the IDF captured a brigade’s worth of intact Egyptian tanks that had been abandoned the previous night, when its commander was ordered to withdraw, but given no direction on what to do with his armor.⁴⁵ After the war, one Egyptian general lamented that “Israel spent years preparing for this war, whereas we prepared for parades.”⁴⁶

The Arab senior leaders however, were not inexperienced. Egypt had fought two high-intensity conflicts with Israel, and many leaders had recent combat experience in Yemen.⁴⁷ The Syrians enjoyed not only regular Soviet arms shipments but Soviets were allegedly captured by the IDF⁴⁸, indicating the Syrians enjoyed professional advisors. Israeli reports of combat detail several hard-fought battles from the Sinai, to the streets of Jerusalem to the Golan Heights. In Abu Aghelia, an Egyptian battalion repulsed lead elements of the IDF and inflicted heavy casualties for the better part of a day.⁴⁹ IDF forces in Gaza were able to capture the Muntar Ridge in order to control the high ground but, suffering 70 killed, were pushed back from the city itself by Palestinian and Egyptian soldiers. In another example, the Jordanian 12th Armored

Battalion successfully defended several attacks by a larger IDF force until finally overcome by IAF air strikes and Israeli reinforcements, prompting writers of the official Israeli history to characterize the Jordanians as having fought “bravely and effectively.”⁵⁰

Each of these considerations – Israeli tactical superiority and Arab leadership weakness – played a role in the quick victory for the IDF. However, without operational leaders to combine its superior tactical actions into a cohesive plan that exploited Arab weaknesses, the IDF would likely have fallen short of meeting all of its objectives in just a few days – and therefore would not have achieved national goals.

Conclusion

The operational factors of time, space and force were not addressed in just the months before June 1967, but had formed much of the doctrine and spirit of the IDF over previous years. Their understanding of the factors and resultant effects on operational planning gave IDF leaders supreme confidence in their ability to succeed over the Arabs on the eve of the Six-Day War. The application of training, doctrine, tactics and new weapons was specifically geared to enable achieving operational and strategic objectives, while operational leadership allowed tactical commanders the flexibility required to achieve success. By identifying the Arab CoG and other key strengths, the IDF attacked critical vulnerabilities to achieve their operational objectives. By June 1967, the IDF knew the quantitative deficit, yet strongly believed in their superiority thanks to years of operational preparation and planning. General Weizmann captured that confidence with, “The Arabs have us surrounded again – *poor bastards*.”⁵¹

¹ Michael Oren, *Six Days of War* (New York: Random House, 2002), 305-306.

² Ibid., 157.

³ Randolph and Winston Churchill, *The Six Day War* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1967), 105.

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- ⁴ Eric Hammel, *Six Days in June: how Israel won the 1967 Arab-Israeli War* (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 153-155.
- ⁵ Churchill, *The Six Day War*, 65.
- ⁶ Israel Tal, "Israel's Doctrine of National Security" *Revue internationale d'histoire militaire*, 42 (1979): 198-212.
- ⁷ Churchill, *The Six Day War*, 114.
- ⁸ Ibid, 82-92.
- ⁹ Yael Dayan, *Israel Journal: June, 1967* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1967), 53.
- ¹⁰ Tal, "Israel's Doctrine of National Security," 208.
- ¹¹ Oren, *Six Days of War*, 156.
- ¹² Moshe Shemesh, "Prelude to the Six Day War: The Arab Israeli Struggle Over Water Control" *Israel Studies* 9, no. 3 (2005): 20.
- ¹³ A.L. Tibawi, "Jerusalem: Its place in Islam and Arab history", *The Arab-Israeli Confrontation of June 1967: An Arab Perspective*, by Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, 10-48. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970: 45.
- ¹⁴ Churchill, *The Six Day War*, 147.
- ¹⁵ Yitzhak Rabin, *The Rabin Memoirs* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979), 101.
- ¹⁶ Peter Young, *The Israeli Campaign* (London: William Kimber, 1967), 83-85.
- ¹⁷ Tal, "Israel's Doctrine of National Security," 210.
- ¹⁸ Rabin, *The Rabin Memoirs*, 101.
- ¹⁹ Young, *The Israeli Campaign*, 83-84.
- ²⁰ Oren, *Six Days of War*, 154.
- ²¹ Ibid., 152.
- ²² Ibid., 155.
- ²³ Churchill, *The Six Day War*, 61-62.
- ²⁴ Oren, *Six Days of War*, 139.
- ²⁵ Ibid., 153.
- ²⁶ Young, *The Israeli Campaign*, 48.
- ²⁷ Oren, *Six Days of War*, 163.
- ²⁸ Arab Forces were fielded with many identical systems to the IDF – M-48 Patton tanks, AMX-13 tanks, Centurion tanks, and artillery pieces.
- ²⁹ Israel Kreiger and Raanan Falk, *Do we debrief successful wars the same way we debrief failures?* (Maxwell AFB: Air War College, 1989), 48-49.
- ³⁰ Young, *The Israeli Campaign*, 108.
- ³¹ Charles Long, *Analysis of the Six Day War* (Ft. Belvoir: DTIC, 1984), 35.
- ³² Milan Vego, *Joint Operational Warfare* (Newport: US Naval War College, 2007), III-51.
- ³³ Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, *The Arab-Israeli Confrontation of June 1967: An Arab Perspective*, (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1970), 49-51.
- ³⁴ Oren, *Six Days of War*, 93.
- ³⁵ Rabin, *The Rabin Memoirs*, 102.
- ³⁶ Oren, *Six Days of War*, 175.
- ³⁷ Avi Kober, "The Rise and Fall of Israeli Operational Art," *The Evolution of Operational Art From Napoleon to the Present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 173.
- ³⁸ Ibid, 177.
- ³⁹ Rabin, *The Rabin Memoirs*, 105.
- ⁴⁰ Young, *The Israeli Campaign*, 105.
- ⁴¹ Ibid., 106.
- ⁴² Churchill, *The Six Day War*, 113.
- ⁴³ Ibid., 90.
- ⁴⁴ Oren, *Six Days of War*, 300-301.
- ⁴⁵ Young, *The Israeli Campaign*, 111-112.
- ⁴⁶ Oren, *Six Days of War*, 177.
- ⁴⁷ Andrew Terrill, *The Conflicts in Yemen and U.S. National Security* (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2011), 5.
- ⁴⁸ Oren, *Six Days of War*, 305.
- ⁴⁹ Churchill, *The Six Day War*, 119.

⁵⁰ Oren, *Six Days of War*, 202-203.

⁵¹ Churchill, *The Six Day War*, 93.

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